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John Henry Eaton to Andrew Jackson, February 8, 1827, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.

JOHN H. EATON TO JACKSON.

Washington, February 8, 1827.

. . . . Your letter I say has been recvd and read—I am glad to be possessed of the sentiments it contains. To Judge White it has been shown, and to none else; and those were his remarks, which I offer to you because they have force and reason and good sense "The generals vews" says he, "are certainly good; but then upon this subject there is no necessity of his giving any opinion. He is called upon by no one, and if he should be, let him not answer, for inasmuch as his votes upon this subject are matter of publicity and known, none should ask for information about that, which his public life already sufficiently dis[c]loses. His frends will not care to enquire, and those who shall enquire will do it for no other vew than to see if something against him can not be produced and made public. I could wish therefore that the general should not in any way commit himself in opinion upon any subject, that when he comes in, he may be entirely free to shape his course accordingly as his views in referrence to the best interest of the Country may dictate to him to be right". . . . I think the reasoning good, and such as should have its effect; for indeed such are the veiws or rather conduct of many that for political interest and gain to themselves they would rejoice in any thing to be said, or published by you out of which they could make a noise. I shall therefore show your vews to none, but retain them as a relick of my own; and I hope that should any one write you on this, or any other political subject, you will forbear to place yourself upon paper, resting in confidence in this, that the application is for occult purposes and to be used if possible against you. There is nothing in the shape of ingenuity to devise, that they will not essay against you,

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and for this obvious reason, that they now plainly and certainly discover that you must and will consign them to retirement and private life. I know of nothing that can prevent it, if health is preserved; and as the Country and its interest is vitally concerned I again say, what heretofore I have said to you, that to forbear all political letters, enquiries and discussions is the true policy. Be still—Be at home is the great and open path to tread, heedless of whatever may be said or done by any of the "corrupt crew"....

I sent you to day the Presidents declaration of War against Geo.1 it produces no ferment here; it is understood to be a tub to the whale, to divert public opinion from them. None are so silly to believe that this Civil administration, and Civil cabinets who so oft have denounced mil. cheiftains will raise the sword against a soverign State: the thing is too preposterous and absurd for belief. Will he send his little army of 6,000, they will be eat up before they get to Georga, while the mil'a of the So and west will never arm in such a cause. How idle then for peicable men like our present rulers who so often have denounced mil. cheiftains, to talk of War, and upon their own citisens. If the laws be not strong enough let the laws be amended and the Judiciary settle the matter—not the bayonette.

1 Georgia Message of Feb. 5. Richardson, II. 370–373.